Solar plane to fly around the world

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Long hidden from Asia’s booming cafe culture, Yangon is witnessing a surge in swish coffee bars providing an alternative to the treacly instant coffee served by thousands of street carts.

RISE OF COFFEE CULTURE

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behind a wooden counter in downtown Yangon’s Coffee Club, the unmistakable hiss of a barista steaming milk briefly drowns out a funky soundtrack piped through a store filled with students glued to their smartphones.

In any other Asian capital it would be a ubiquitous sight. But in Yangon, this is something new.

Long absent from the region’s booming café culture, Myanmar’s commercial capital is now witnessing a surge in swish coffee bars providing an alternative to the treacle instant coffee served by thousands of street carts.

It is a trend that points both to the changing tastes of Myanmar’s emerging middle-class but also the widening gap between them and the nation’s poor. Nyi Nyi Tun, a doctor, is typical of the newly aspirant customers relishing consumer goods that were either far beyond their reach or simply unavailable under Myanmar’s brutal and economically incompetent dictatorship.

“I came here to read,” he said, sipping an americano and perusing the web on a tablet. “With friends, a streetside tea shop is better. But if you want to be somewhere alone and quiet, then this kind of coffee shop is good.”

To escape the noisy onslaught of Yangon’s increasingly vehicle-clogged streets, Nyi Nyi Tun is willing to fork out as much as $2 — ten times what a traditional Myanmar coffee made from pre-mixed sachets and condensed milk costs at roadside stalls.

‘Exponential growth’

In the last few years since the end of outright military rule in 2011, around two dozen specialty coffee shops have opened up in Yangon alone.

“You will witness exponential growth of the coffee industry in the next three years,” predicts Ye Naing Wynn, managing director of the Nervin Cafe chain — Myanmar’s oldest — which now boasts five outlets including in Mandalay and the capital Naypyidaw.
A country like Myanmar has newly opened up. People have been closed up for so many years. The natural human reaction is they want to experience new things,” he adds.

Initially it was the large influx of expats and tourists that helped foster Yangon’s nascent coffee scene. But owners say locals now make up the majority of drinkers.

“That’s my target audience going forward to be honest... because any food and beverage business that relies 70 percent on locals ought to do well in the long run,” says Thura Ko Ko, who returned to Myanmar from overseas four years ago and opened The Coffee Club above another of his businesses — a mobile phone shop.

It helps, he adds, that specialty coffee is seen as something aspirational and trendy.

“Sometimes I sit in and I overhear some new local customers try and they’re not quite sure what a cappuccino is — but they’ve seen it (on) the TV, they’ve seen it online and that’s been a big influence in lifestyle as well. Everything from Korean soaps to films,” he says.

Out of reach

The economic potential of Myanmar’s growing middle class is not lost on international companies who are scrambling to access one of Asia’s last untapped markets.

In 2013 Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz hinted during a trip to Thailand that he was eyeing Myanmar.

Management consulting giant McKinsey believes up to a quarter of Myanmar’s population could be living in large cities by 2030 — up from 13 percent in 2010 — while the economy, if managed properly, could quadruple from $45bn in 2010 to $200bn by 2030.

“The size of the urban middle class is expected to double over the next decade, with annual double-digit growth in middle class incomes over the next five years,” says Rajiv Biswas, Asia-Pacific chief economist at IHS.

“This will generate very rapid growth in urban consumer demand for retail goods, including consumer durables such as autos, motorcycles, refrigerators and air conditioners, consumer electronics such as mobile telephones and tablets, and basic consumer goods such as food and beverages,” he adds.

But Sean Turnell, an expert on Myanmar’s economy at Macquarie University in Australia, warns against overhyping the potential of the middle class in a country where the vast majority of its 60 million population are the rural poor.

“Serious consumption usually starts for people with disposable incomes above around $5,000. There would be few in Myanmar with this sort of spending power,” he says.

However much buzz is created by the opening of the next hip coffee joint, for people like Ko Phyo, who runs a photography shop in Yangon, a latte will likely remain far outside his budget.

“It’s too expensive for ordinary people,” the 33-year-old says while sipping a sweet brew in one of Yangon’s many traditional, cheaper teashops.

“It’s ten times more expensive in those places. Only the middle classes can afford that.” AFP
Stafford Sri Lankan School holds Annual Awards Day

The Annual Awards Day of Stafford Sri Lankan School Doha was held recently at the Qatar University Auditorium. The Chief Guest was Saliya Karunanayake, Senior Vice-President, Flight Operations, Qatar Airways.

It was a memorable occasion for a number of students who were awarded gold, silver and bronze awards for best performances in their grade while many were awarded subject prizes. The dance troupe and the western band of the school, who provided entertainment, added colour to the occasion.

While addressing the audience Karunanayake said that a great responsibility lies with not only the teachers but also the parents to mould the children to become good citizens.

He also said that the parents should not be over anxious about making them the type of professionals they want them to be but allow them to choose their career paths according to their talents. The function was attended by the staff of the school, the parents of the prize winners and many invitees.

Two DMIS students join ‘Proud To Be An Indian’ tour

Two DMIS students were selected in the ‘Proud To Be An Indian’ quiz contest conducted by Asianet channel. Gopika Chandran and Huda Abdul Hameed of Grade 8 joined the group of 34 students who flew to India to be the part of the 66th Indian Republic Day celebrations. Students were accompanied by teacher Sreeja. The students were taken to see the Qutb Minar in New Delhi.

They watched Republic Day parade live on January 26 and witnessed the unfurling of Indian National flag. Later they were taken to Jaipur and visited the Ajmer Sherif Dargah, the palace of the Maharaja, Choki Dhani and the Gandhian Studies centre in the Rajasthan University.

On January 30 the group observed the Martyrs Day at the Gandhi Samadhi at Raj Ghat with two minutes’ silence. They also had a meeting with Human Resources minister Smriti Zubin Irani.

SDC holds Karate Belt awarding ceremony

Skills Development Centre (SDC) conducted Karate Belt Awarding ceremony recently at Maestro Community Hall. The Institute got 100 percent success rate with 76 students participating and 2 first Dan Black Belts were awarded to Jeehan Shameem and Saranya Ravi.

The tests were conducted by Qatar Karate Federation and Japan Shotokan Karate Association – Qatar chapter. Chief Guest, Divakar Poojary, General Secretary of Indian Cultural Centre, Embassy of India, SDC Director A K Jaleel, JSKA Qatar Chief Instructor cum SDC Karate Instructor Sensei Shihabudeen awarded the belts and certificates to the winners. SDC HR director Aqinial welcomed the guests.
The French Men’s Handball team received complete sets of Qatari national dress by Al Siddiqi Holding, through its home-grown Qatari Men’s fashion brand Al Shal. The event was held at the Intercontinental the City, Doha, to mark the end of the 24th Men’s Handball World Championship in which the French team emerged the winners.

The French team members – both players and support team composed of close to 30 people – received the full set of traditional Qatari attire that is composed of a Thob (long tunic), a Ghotra (local head dress), a Serwal (traditional trouser), a Taqia (skull-cap), and an Iqal (rope). The attire was completely made to measure in Qatar by Al Shal. Mahmood Almahmood, director of Al Shal, helped the players to dress up and explained how each piece of the outfit should be worn.

Mohammed Al Siddiqi, Board Member and Managing Director, Al Siddiqi Holding, said: “There is no better way to promote intercultural understanding than giving our guests a chance to experience our culture first-hand and take home a part of it. We are delighted to offer the national dress to the French delegation.”

Guzergah-e-Khayal Toastmasters Club, the first Urdu language Toastmasters Club in Qatar, was recently recognised at an educational workshop entitled “Crafting Winning Speeches” at College of the North Atlantic – Qatar (CNA-Q), which was organised by Division E in partnership with CNA-Q.

Founder President of Guzergah-e-Khayal Toastmasters Club Faisal Hanif along with Treasurer Muneeb Shaikh, and Club Secretary Rizwan Ali were awarded with the Toastmasters International ‘certificate of recognition’ by CNA-Q president Dr Ken MacLeod in presence of Division E Governor Naseemuddin A Hameed.

Guzergah-e-Khayal (GK) Toastmasters Club is first of its kind which is founded with a distinctive approach to help members improve their communication, public speaking, and leadership skills in Urdu and English at the same time. GK Toastmasters is the only club which provides a platform for both English and Urdu speakers.
Revolutionising the concept of Indian cuisine has been the key to Atul Kochhar’s (pictured) success since moving to Britain as a young chef in the early ‘90s.

He made history as the first Indian chef to receive a Michelin star for his debut London restaurant Tamarind in 2001. Six years later, he picked up another accolade for his second venture, Benares, in 2007.

The Mayfair restaurant is the inspiration for his fourth cookbook, which aims to share his unique approach to fine dining.

The 44-year-old chef and restaurateur spoke about growing up in India, his philosophy of cuisine, and his tips for cooking at home.

In India, you grew up in a foodie family. Did you automatically want to become a chef?

No, I wanted to be a cricketer but that didn’t happen unfortunately. Growing up in a household where there were six of us — five sisters and a younger brother — food was always around us. India produces around 2,000 varieties of mangoes, and going through different mangoes through the seasons was a heck of a thing. My family was very into it; my dad was very passionate about mangoes. He would make us taste them and that was a great learning.

What did you want to achieve when you moved to Britain?

When I arrived, I saw Indian food really in the dark ages. The way it was seen here, it was just curry. But I landed in the right place at the right time. The UK was about to become the melting pot of cuisines. There were chefs like Marco Pierre White, Gordon Ramsey, chef Nico Ladenis, many more... they were just changing the cuisine in this country and I kind of became part of the movement.

As Benares is the subject of your new cookbook, what contributions do you feel the restaurant has made to the British food scene?

We have adapted and adopted — both the culture, the cuisine, the ingredients, everything and brought two diverse cultures closer... We see ourselves as a British Indian restaurant and we’re very proud of it.

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We’ve seen an influx of food trends in Britain in the past decade. Has that affected the way you cook now?

To me, it’s inspirational. There are ingredients that are not from my cuisine, but I’m motivated to bring that into my food. Something like chia seeds, which is a hotly debated topic at the moment. It’s a super food and we use chia seed in making a drink in India. But I created a dessert out of it... So, you come back into main play again and you’re on trend.

What are your tips for cooking Indian style cuisine?

The simpler, the better. And get to know spices and start cooking with them. Always use them as if you’re using salt and pepper. If you go beyond that, perhaps you’ll shock your system and you won’t go back to do it.

**Mangsho Ghugni**
(Lamb Rump with Chickpeas)

This is a very traditional recipe of meat curry though instead of using diced meat I have used lamb rump. This only changes the appearance of the preparation but not the flavour profile.

*Serves: 4
Preparation time 20 minutes
Cooking time 30 minutes*

**Ingredients:**
- Chickpeas: 150 grams chickpeas, soaked in water overnight
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 black cardamom
- 1 clove
- 1 tsp salt
- Lamb rump: 100 ml vegetable or mustard oil
- 6 cloves
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 black cardamom
- 200 grams onions, sliced
- 15 grams ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tsp salt
- 200 grams tomatoes, chopped
- 4 lamb leg steaks (100 grams X 4)
- 2 tbsp coriander leaves, chopped
- 1/2 tsp garam masala (Bengali)

To finish:
- 2 tbsp of mixed spices - coriander seeds, cumin seeds, sesame seeds, black peppers
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- Mixed cress for garnish

**Method:**

Soak chickpeas in water and salt overnight. Drain the water and start with fresh water and spices and boil the chickpeas until cooked. Set aside until required.

In a separate pan heat oil and saute cloves, bay leaf and black cardamom. Add sliced onions and saute until translucent, add ginger–garlic paste and cook well. Add dried powdered spices, tomatoes and lamb steaks and add enough water to cover the mixture, cook until lamb is tender.

Add chickpeas and simmer until lamb is 3/4 cooked. Separate the rump from the chickpeas. Brush the rump with Dijon mustard paste and roll it over crackled–pounded spices. Roast in medium hot oven for 5–6 minutes and remove. Place chickpeas and sit rump on top garnished with mixed cress. Serve hot with some rice or bread.
Five teams competing for the $30m Google Lunar X Prize have just been awarded a combined $5.25m for meeting significant milestones in developing a robot that can safely land on the surface of the moon, travel 500 metres over the lunar surface and send mooncasts back to the Earth. A tiny start-up from India, Team Indus, with no experience in robotics or space flight just won $1m of this prize. It stood head to head with companies that had been funded by billionaires, had received the assistance of Nasa and had the support of leading universities.

The good news is that governments no longer have a monopoly on space exploration. In two or three decades, we will have entrepreneurs taking us on private spaceflights to the moon. That is what has become possible.

What has changed since the days of the Apollo moon landings is that the cost of building technologies has dropped exponentially. What cost billions of dollars then costs millions now, and sometimes even less. Our smartphones have computers that are more powerful than the Cray supercomputers of yesterday — which had strict export controls and cost tens of millions of dollars. We carry high-definition cameras in our pockets that are more powerful than those on Nasa spacecraft. The cameras in the Mars Curiosity Rover, for example, have a resolution of 2 megapixels with 8GB of flash memory, the same as our clunky first-generation iPhones. The Apollo Guidance Computer, which took humans to the moon in 1966, had a 2.048 MHz processor — slower than the ones you find in calculators and musical greeting cards.

The same technologies as are available in the United States and Europe are available worldwide. Innovation has globalised.

That is why Team Indus could compete with companies such as Moon Express, which already received $25,000 prize to the first person to fly non-stop between New York and Paris. Several unsuccessful attempts were made before an American airmail pilot named Charles Lindbergh won the competition in 1927 with his plane, The Spirit of St Louis. Lindbergh’s achievement made him a national hero and a global celebrity. And it sparked the interest and investment that led to the modern aviation industry.

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really solid schedule is the only way it works for me. I have to plan everything in advance. Running a tight ship and having a track of the youngsters’ busy schedules.

increased significantly, reports mirror.co.uk.

husband Nick Gordon and a friend last week. They are asking you to honour our request for privacy during this difficult time. And is surrounded by immediate family. As her father already stated, we help him celebrate,” said a source.

Further guests included David Beckham, Jennifer Lawrence and Adele. The entire venue was hired out and those who attended were treated to a private performance by Adele and an impromptu cameo by David Beckham, who danced with Jennifer Lawrence and Miley Cyrus.

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+PLUS+

a “control freak” and is constantly

S

Does the Academy only praise black actors from the center of our own narrative, driving certain types of black characters, and if so, how does that impact the representation of black characters on screen?

Lincoln, Sean Penn as Harvey Milk or sadistic African dictator Idi Amin is certainly less heroic or likable than,

written in both — was doubly

Adnan Joubran in Paris, France,” they tweeted.

A snub is all subjective, of course, but So who was robbed? And does that mean what does it all mean? Let’s take a look.

The Help. The Academy has been

Oscars only go to black actors in ‘subservient’ roles: David Oyelowo

Kris Kristofferson awarding to black actors.

By Stephanie Merry

D

Adnan Joubran in Paris, France, Award-winning composer.

Kristina Brown still ‘fighting for her life’

A statement from the family read: “Shilpa Krista is fighting to save her life and we are furious at the inconsistencies. Shilpa is a talented, passionate and beautiful woman. We remain hopeful that the doctors will do their best to save her life.”

Not getting window for Saat Uchakkey: Pandey

BOLLYWOOD NEWS

Amitabh turns radio jockey for a day

By Hemhoo Deshpande

Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan has entertained the masses on the big screen for over 50 years now. The megastar, who has worked in over 1,000 films, is truly a legend in the film industry.

As the first notable announcement of the year, the veteran actor has been Grinding his vocal cords to sing a song for India’s leading radio station, Red FM.

The 72-year-old is set to take the RED FM listeners by surprise as he chats with them over phone. Listeners can tune into “All India Shamitabh”, the new show, on RED FM starting February 28.

Adnan Joubran in Paris, France, Award-winning composer.

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Solar-powered plane to fly around the world

Two Swiss pilots are to attempt to fly around the world in a plane powered solely by the sun, seeking to prove that such a flight is possible without using fossil fuel.

**Structure:**
- Carbon fibre, three times lighter than paper

**Wings:**
- 17,000 solar cells – 135 microns thick – supply four electric motors with renewable energy

**Propulsion:**
- Four wing pods each contain 17.5hp electric motor and lithium polymer battery
- Solar cells recharge batteries – total mass 633kg – to allow plane to fly at night

**FLIGHT:**
- 35,000km journey will span 25 flight days spread over five months at average speed of 70km/h, with stops at 12 locations

**SOLAR IMPULSE 2**
- **Wingspan:** 72 metres – wider than Boeing 747
- **Weight:** 2,300kg – same as family car

**Stopovers**

- **Start/Finish:** Abu Dhabi
- **PACIFIC OCEAN**
  - Mid U.S.
  - Hawaii U.S.
  - Phoenix U.S.
  - New York U.S.
  - Ahmedabad INDIA
  - Muscat OMAN
  - Southern Europe or North Africa
- **ATLANTIC OCEAN**
  - Varanasi INDIA
  - Mandalay MYANMAR
  - Nanjing CHINA
  - Chongqing CHINA
  - Varanasi INDIA
  - Mandalay MYANMAR
  - Muscat OMAN
  - New York U.S.
  - Phoenix U.S.
  - Hawaii U.S.
- **PACIFIC OCEAN**

**During day:**
- Aircraft climbs to 8,500m as it stores solar energy.
- Top speed: 140km/h

**During night:**
- Descends to 1,500m and slows to conserve power and reduce pilot stress

- Ergonomically designed seat allows room for exercise and 20-minute catnaps during five-day ocean crossings
- Toilet
- Parachute and life-raft packed into seat-back

**Autopilot alerts pilot of anomaly via wrist-mounted buzzer

**Oxygen supply for high altitude flight

**Cockpit:**
- 3.8 cubic metres. Unpressurized, unheated, but highly insulated cabin designed to support solo pilot for 5-6 days

**Source:** Solar Impulse
**Picture:** Getty Images

© GRAPHIC NEWS

*Solar Impulse 2 piloted by project founders Bertrand Piccard and André Borschberg*
Diabetes drug may up cancer risk in smokers

Depending on their smoking history, a drug may have contrary effects on people suffering from diabetes — reducing lung cancer risk among nonsmokers and increasing the risk among smokers.

Among nonsmokers who had diabetes, those who took the diabetes drug metformin had a decrease in lung cancer risk, the findings showed.

“Our results suggest that risk might differ by smoking history, with metformin decreasing risk among nonsmokers and increasing risk among current smokers,” said Lori Sakoda, research scientist at Kaiser Permanente Division of Research in Oakland, California.

The study involved 47,351 diabetic patients (54 percent men), 40 years or older, who completed a health-related survey between 1994 and 1996. During 15 years of follow-up, 747 patients were diagnosed with lung cancer.

Metformin use was not associated with lower lung cancer risk overall; however, the risk was 43 percent lower among diabetic patients who had never smoked, and the risk appeared to decrease with longer use.

Metformin use for five or more years was associated with a 31 percent decrease in the risk for adenocarcinoma, the most common type of lung cancer diagnosed in nonsmokers, and an 82 percent increase in the risk for small-cell carcinoma, a type of lung cancer often diagnosed in smokers.

The study appeared in the journal Cancer Prevention Research.

‘Feeding and fasting’ hormone can improve insulin action

A researcher has found that adropin, a hormone that regulates whether the body burns fat or sugar during feeding and fasting cycles, can improve insulin action in obese, diabetic mice.

It suggests that the hormone may work as a therapy for type 2 diabetes.

“Adropin is a poorly understood hormone,” said Andrew Butler, professor of pharmacological and physiological science at Saint Louis University in the US.

“Building on that work, the paper reports that adropin, in combination with metformin therapy, further reduces blood glucose as a metabolic fuel in muscle. Our observations suggest that the hormone may work as a therapy for type 2 diabetes,” explained Andrew Butler, professor at Saint Louis University in the US.

“Adropin is a hormone that regulates whether the body burns fat or sugar during feeding and fasting cycles, can improve insulin action in obese, diabetic mice. It suggests that the hormone may work as a therapy for type 2 diabetes,” explained Andrew Butler, professor at Saint Louis University in the US.

When the team measured adropin levels in mice, they were suppressed under fasting conditions and stimulated after feeding, suggesting functions related to the changes in metabolism that occur with feeding and fasting.

“Our work suggests that adropin plays a role in regulating metabolic (energy) homeostasis,” Butler added.

Basically, when you are well fed, your body prefers to use glucose and the release of adropin suppresses that change by enhancing the use of glucose as a metabolic fuel in muscle.

“However, when you are fasting, your body prefers to use fatty acids. Our observations suggest that a decline in adropin with fasting may be a signal to ‘take the brakes off’ the use of fatty acids,” he added.

Building on that work, the paper reports that low levels of the hormone observed in obesity may contribute to diabetes and the reduced ability of the body to use glucose. Butler describes the finding as akin to finding in the sense of new treatments for impaired glucose tolerance.

The study appeared in the journal Molecular Metabolism.

Eating food cooked at high temperatures increases the risk of Alzheimer’s disease, a fascinating research has found.

When food is cooked at high temperatures or aged for a long time such as in hard cheese, it increases the content of advanced glycation end products (AGEs), a group of compounds that are combinations of sugars and proteins and other large molecules.

AGEs increase the risk of various chronic diseases through several mechanisms including increased inflammation and oxidative stress. They can also bind to the receptor for AGEs (RAGE). RAGE transports beta-amyloid proteins that they contain more than 210 mg of sodium per serving, according to results in Pediatrics.

The researchers also flagged foods with more than 35 percent of their total calories from sugar, or at least one source of added sugars, like corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, honey and fructose.

Most infant vegetables, dinners, fruits and cereals did not contain added sugars. But half of the ready-to-serve mixed grains and fruits had at least one added sugar source, and often more than 35 percent of total calories came from sugar.

For toddlers, most savory snacks, desserts and juices or drinks contained at least one added sugar, and 61 percent of dairy-based desserts contained at least 1 added sugar and 35 percent of calories from sugar, the authors write.

“Regrettably, parents need to read labels carefully to avoid added salt and sugars in food commercially prepared for toddlers,” said Dr Susan S Baker of the Digestive Diseases and Nutrition Center at the University at Buffalo in New York. Baker coauthored an editorial published with the report.

The most common added sugars were fruit juice concentrate, sugar, cane, syrup and malt.

Studies have found similar results in Canada and the UK, Cogswell said.

“When you buy processed or packaged foods, read the nutrition panel and look for those labeled ‘low-sodium’ or ‘no salt’ or ‘no sugar added,’” Cogswell advises. “An easy tip for parents is to focus on the amount of sodium per serving,” she added. “Those foods with less than 140 mg per serving are considered low in sodium.”


Reuters

Packaged toddler foods often high in sugar, salt

By Kathryn Doyle

In the US, commercial foods for toddlers often have high amounts of sugar, or added sugars, according to a new study shows. For younger babies, most commercial foods were low in sodium and the majority of infant meals, vegetables, fruits, and dry infant cereals did not contain added sugars, which is good news, said lead researcher Mary E Cogswell of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

But the situation was more troubling for toddler foods.

“It was surprising that more than seven of 10 packaged toddler meals contained too much sodium,” Cogswell said.

Also, she said, “a substantial proportion of toddler foods and infant and toddler snacks, even those we don’t think of as sweet — like toddler meals and salty snacks — contained at least one added sugar.”

“A healthy diet for the entire family one that is limited in added salt and sugar and rich in fruits and vegetables, can help set taste preferences of the youngest family members eating from the table and ultimately prevent chronic diseases related to poor food choices,” Cogswell said.

Recommended daily sodium intake ranges from 120 milligrams (mg) for infants 0 to 6 months, to 370 mg for ages 7 to 12 months and 1,000 mg ages 1 to 3 years, Cogswell said.

“Using a 2012 database of more than 1,000 packaged infant and toddler foods and drinks sold in the US, the researchers found that almost all of the more than 600 vegetables, dinners, dry cereals and ready to serve grains and fruit geared to infants under age 1 were low sodium, and none were high sodium.

But nearly three-quarters of toddler dinners geared to kids age 1 to 3 had high sodium, meaning they contained more than 210 mg of sodium per serving, according to results in Pediatrics.

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But the situation was more troubling for toddler foods.

“It was surprising that more than seven of 10 packaged toddler meals contained too much sodium,” Cogswell said.

Also, she said, “a substantial proportion of toddler foods and infant and toddler snacks, even those we don’t think of as sweet — like toddler meals and salty snacks — contained at least one added sugar.”

“A healthy diet for the entire family one that is limited in added salt and sugar and rich in fruits and vegetables, can help set taste preferences of the youngest family members eating from the table and ultimately prevent chronic diseases related to poor food choices,” Cogswell said.

Recommended daily sodium intake ranges from 120 milligrams (mg) for infants 0 to 6 months, to 370 mg for ages 7 to 12 months and 1,000 mg ages 1 to 3 years, Cogswell said.

“Using a 2012 database of more than 1,000 packaged infant and toddler foods and drinks sold in the US, the researchers found that almost all of the more than 600 vegetables, dinners, dry cereals and ready to serve grains and fruit geared to infants under age 1 were low sodium, and none were high sodium.

But nearly three-quarters of toddler dinners geared to kids age 1 to 3 had high sodium, meaning they contained more than 210 mg of sodium per serving, according to results in Pediatrics.

The researchers also flagged foods with more than 35 percent of their total calories from sugar, or at least one source of added sugars, like corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, honey and fructose.

Most infant vegetables, dinners, fruits and cereals did not contain added sugars. But half of the ready-to-serve mixed grains and fruits had at least one added sugar source, and often more than 35 percent of total calories came from sugar.

For toddlers, most savory snacks, desserts and juices or drinks contained at least one added sugar, and 61 percent of dairy-based desserts contained at least 1 added sugar and 35 percent of calories from sugar, the authors write.

“Regrettably, parents need to read labels carefully to avoid added salt and sugars in food commercially prepared for toddlers,” said Dr Susan S Baker of the Digestive Diseases and Nutrition Center at the University at Buffalo in New York. Baker coauthored an editorial published with the report.

The most common added sugars were fruit juice concentrate, sugar, cane, syrup and malt.

Studies have found similar results in Canada and the UK, Cogswell said.

“When you buy processed or packaged foods, read the nutrition panel and look for those labeled ‘low-sodium’ or ‘no salt’ or ‘no sugar added,’” Cogswell advises. “An easy tip for parents is to focus on the amount of sodium per serving,” she added. “Those foods with less than 140 mg per serving are considered low in sodium.”


Reuters
Why are people buying fewer tablets?

By Stuart Dredge

B

oming iPhone sales were the driving force behind Apple's record revenues in the final quarter of 2014, with its $18bn net profit the largest quarterly profit reported by any company.

Even so, one part of Apple's business wasn't so positive: its iPad tablet. Apple sold 21.4m of them in the last three months of 2014 compared to 26m in the last quarter of 2013 — a 17.7 percent drop.

Apple wasn't alone. Research firms IDC and Canalsys have both claimed that global tablet shipments were down year-on-year that quarter — the first such decline since Apple reignited the tablet market in 2010.

IDC reported a 3.2 percent drop in shipments to 76.1m units, while Canalys suggested a 12 percent decline to 67m units. Why the difference? IDC counted “2-in-1” laptop/tablet hybrids in its figures.

Both agreed on the general trend: manufacturers are shipping fewer tablets, and by extension, people are buying fewer of them. But why? Here are the main reasons.

1) Tablet buyers are hanging on to them for longer

In 2010, no one was sure how often people would want to upgrade their tablets. Would it be every 12-18 months like a smartphone, or would their upgrade cycle be longer, and more like that of computers? Five years on, it's becoming clearer.

“The upgrade cycle is longer,” said Apple chief executive Tim Cook, in his last earnings call. “It’s longer than an iPhone, probably between an iPhone and a PC. We haven’t been in the business long enough to say that with certainty, but that’s what we think.”

“The lifetime of tablets is being extended — they are shared out among family members and software upgrades, especially for iOS devices, keep the tablets current,” said Gartner research director Ranjit Atwal recently.

If you’re a mainstream tablet owner, chances are your device is mainly used for email, social networking, light web browsing and perhaps games and video streaming. Unless you’re into processor-stretching 3D games, none of those categories provide a huge incentive to upgrade once a year.

2) Larger-screened smartphones are proving popular

The slowing growth and now decline in tablet shipments has come alongside the emergence of the “phablet” — larger-screened smartphones that first came to prominence from Android manufacturers, before Apple finally followed suit in the autumn of 2014.

Think back to the mainstream tablet use cases listed earlier: a big smartphone can do a capable job at all of them. Especially as the boundaries between the two categories narrow.

Canalys estimates that in the last quarter of 2014, seven-inch tablets accounted for half of all Android tablet shipments — and noted that these are exactly the devices most under threat from larger-screen smartphones.

Meanwhile, even Apple’s keenest customers may have stopped and thought about a new iPad purchase in the final months of 2014, given the launch of the iPhone 6 and 6 Plus. IDC’s senior research analyst, Jitesh Ubrani, saw the “excitement around the launch of the new iPhones” as a key factor in iPad’s tough quarter.

3) Laptops are also competing

Tech journalism traditions dictate that every new product category must “kill” another one. In the case of tablets, netbooks seemed the likeliest victim back in 2010. However, their larger laptop cousins have proved a tougher rival in the years since.

If fewer techy potential tablet owners are finding that a phablet can cater to their needs, so the more techy ones may be finding the lure of a laptop hard to resist. Given that these people are also likely to have large-screened smartphones, a tablet may seem like more of a luxury device.

“There is probably some level of cannibalisation that’s going on with the Mac on one side and the Phone on the other,” said Cook after the quarter during which iPad sales dipped, but sales of Mac laptops saw “double-digit” growth. “I’m sure that some people looked at the Mac and iPad and decided on a Mac,” Cook told analysts in the company’s last but one earnings call. “And I am fine with that by the way.”

Cheaper Chromebooks and an aggressive push for “Windows with Bing” laptops were also factors as 2014 drew to a close — the latter in particular, according to Canalys.

“The new price points it enabled stimulated notebook demand in established markets in Western Europe and the US. This will have hurt tablet sales in these markets in the fourth quarter as consumers opted to replace ageing consumer notebooks,” said research analyst Jason Low.

4) Samsung and Amazon have been struggling

Apple wasn’t the only tablet maker to ship fewer devices in the final quarter of 2014 than the same period the year before. IDC estimated that Samsung’s shipments fell 18.4 percent to 11 million units, with Ubrani suggesting its struggles proved that “mild to high-priced Android tablets simply aren’t cut out for today’s tablet market”.

On the face of it, Amazon had an exceptionally bad final three months of the year too. IDC claimed that its shipments fell from 5.8 million to 1.7 million units year-on-year — a 4.1 million drop in a quarter when the company estimated that the overall market was down by just 2.5 million units.

Amazon dragging everyone else down? Not so much: IDC didn’t count shipments of the company’s new six-inch Fire HD tablet, because the screen size didn’t match its definition of a “tablet”. Canalys claimed that Amazon shipped 4 million tablets during the quarter, by contrast.

Both companies faced the challenges listed earlier, though, with Amazon particularly focused on the kind of mainstream tablet users who would be most likely to balk at replacing the tablet they bought a year before so soon.

5) Has there been a lack of innovation?

The final theory doing the rounds about why tablet shipments are falling is the suggestion that 2014’s crop of new models lacked genuinely exciting and innovative new features to persuade people to get their wallets out.

Gartner’s Atwal described this as “the lack of innovation in hardware which refrains consumers from upgrading” in a year when new devices from Apple, Samsung, Amazon and their rivals were mostly iterative in their improvements over previous models.

There is no firm opinion on what improvement would be capable of kicking some life back into tablet sales, though. Twelve-inch displays? Haptic feedback? More niche tablets aimed at specific groups like children, gamers or designers? Perhaps software will be the key: smarter Siri-style virtual agents to anticipate our needs, or tools to make tablets the heart of our increasingly-connected homes. Or perhaps the next big uplift in tablet sales will be about marketing, selling more to schools and businesses.

The Guardian
LEARN ARABIC

Invitations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welcome</th>
<th>Ahlan wa sahlan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Come in</td>
<td>Tafa’dal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like your visit</td>
<td>Tasourounee ziyaratouk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are invited to lunch</td>
<td>Innaka maddoo ila alga’a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where do you like to spend the holiday?</td>
<td>Ayna touhibbou an taqdeee alcootla?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have invited the friends</td>
<td>Lqad daçawtu alašdiqa’a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are invited to a dancing party</td>
<td>Innaka maddoo ila hafa raqiṣa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I see you again?</td>
<td>Hal astateeqou an araka ūnatiyan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you busy?</td>
<td>Hal anta mašgoool?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let us drink coffee together tomorrow morning</td>
<td>Linatanawal alqahwa maʃan gadan šabahan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good-bye</td>
<td>Ila lliqa’a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ç = ‘a’ in ‘ag

Baby Blues by Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman

Hagar The Horrible by Chris Browne

Zits by Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman

ALL IN THE MIND
Can you find the hidden words? They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, forwards or backwards.

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BABY BLUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I’m worried about joining the office</th>
<th>I won’t be fun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fun? Wanda, most of these girls are in their twenties. They’ll crush me!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unless, I crush them first!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You men have strange ideas of relaxing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

| I don’t see any footsteps. |
| The ten hand was on the edge. |
| We’re standing in an enemy’s front. |
| In that case, we should go home fast! |

ZITS

| When I was a kid, we had a van that we would drive on long trips. |
| Wedding season, visitors, travel attractions. |
| Stop to buy a nut log. |
| In my mom’s day, vans were dirty. |
| Wasn’t everything! |

ALL IN THE MIND
Can you find the hidden words? They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, forwards or backwards.

| L A T N O Z I R O H I R I E D I S N I |
| R E W O L C Y L C N N E X T T O V L |
| T U O B R N H C A R P O A O D A |
| O D A Y R G E L B R B C P U C D V L D |
| C D R S P E I H E E R O T T O J E S J |
| D E I E C N T A D O L S V T N A R D O |
| I C S B E E B R S I I Q H E T C P R I |
| A R I B L E N S E D H R W B I E D A N |
| G E N I Q E V D E A O A I V O N M W I |
| D A G N I X A W I U T V T V U T W K N |
| N S J O T F E L O N O H Z O O J E C G |
| A E I N O R H T V G S R R U D S A D |
| L G N I T T U B A I A N N S B T B R |
| H T A E N E B O R R O D E C L I N E S E |
| D E S C E N D I N G V D E G O U V O V |
| D G N I L L A F R I A I O A J P B U E |
| G N I W O L F R E D N U V W S R T T R |
| S D R A W R O F T V C A J V N T J H S |
| L A C I T R E V R B E M W C I R C L E |

ABOUT, ABOVE, ABUTTING, ACROSS, ADJACENT, ADJOINING, ADVANCE, AROUND, ASCENDING, BACKWARDS, BELOW, BENEATH, CIRCLE, CONTIGUOUS, DECLINE, DECREASE, DESCENDING, DIAGONAL, DOWN, EAST, EBBING, FALLING, FLOWING, FORWARDS, HIGHER, HORIZONTAL, INcline, INCREASE, INSIDE, LEFT, LOWER, NEXT TO, NORTH, OUTSIDE, OVER, RETREAT, REVERSE, RIGHT, RISING, SOUTH, THROUGH, UNDER, UP, VERTICAL, VIA, WAXING, WAXING, WEST.
How to play Hyper Sudoku:
A Hyper Sudoku Puzzle is solved by filling the numbers from 1 to 9 into the blank cells. A Hyper Sudoku has
13 regions (four regions overlap with the nine standard regions). In all regions the numbers from 1 to 9 can appear
only once. Otherwise, a Hyper Sudoku is solved like a normal Sudoku.

How to play Kakuro:
The kakuro grid, unlike in sudoku, can be of any size. It has rows and columns, and
dark cells like in a crossword. And, just like in a crossword, some of the dark cells will
contain numbers. Some cells will contain two
numbers. However, in a crossword the numbers reference clues. In a kakuro, the numbers are
all you get! They denote the total of the
digits in the row or column referenced by the
number.
Within each collection of cells - called a run
- any of the
numbers 1
to 9 may be
used, but,
like sudoku, each
number may only be
used once.

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS**
1 Easy mark
4 Air Force One honcho
6 1960 Alfred Hitchcock
8 1973 to 1978 John C. Reilly
10 “In what way?”
12 Start of a rumor
13 “In what way?”
14 Overseer of corp.
accounts
15 Start all over
16 Start of a rumor
18 Gulf State leader
19 Despierto
20 2012 John C. Reilly
animated film
21 “In what way?”
22 Roadie’s tote
23 Prefix with 28-Across
24 N.Y.C. home to works of
Picasso
25 Musical improv
28 Jet
31 Pop the question
34 Kabayaki fish
36 Main part of a monocle
38 Conductor Zubin ___
39 2012 Quentin Tarantino
western
43 Columbus’s hometown
44 Student aid
45 Its score is reported on
some univ. applications
46 Demi or Julianne Moore
49 Colleague of Roberts
and Scalia
51 Gridiron positions: Abbrev.
52 Historical
54 Ages and ages
55 Finalizes, with “down”
56 Gulf War ally
59 Rice on a shelf
60 Lunch time, maybe
61 Things that earn earn cash
62 “You mean me?”
63 La Pria’s land: Abbrev.

**DOWN**
1 Beginning or end of “Athena”
2 Prior to, in poetry
3 Electricity producers
4 Like school for toddlers,
in brief
5 Notes after do
6 It has Cut, Copy and
Paste commands
7 Swordsman of book
and film
8 Notable one in a
community
9 Butchery or bakery
10 “You betcha”
11 Subject of many a viral
video
12 Letters for a prince
13 William Collins’s “___
to Evening”
14 Overseer of corp.
accounts
15 Start all over
16 Start of a rumor
17 “In what way?”
18 Gulf State leader
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62 “You mean me?”
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**EASY SUDOKU**

Easy Sudoku Puzzles
Place a digit from 1 to 9 in
each empty cell so every
row, every column and
every 3x3 box contains all
the digits 1 to 9.

**HYPER SUDOKU**

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Florida calls on civilian ‘patrols’ to battle pythons

By Zachary Fagenson

Florida wildlife officials, opening a new front in the war on invasive snakes, are recruiting the general public for “python patrols” that teach them how to identify and even capture some of the hissing, snapping reptiles. “We consider (Burmese pythons) established, which means the hope of removing them is pretty slim,” said Jenny Novak, a Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) biologist, during a recent training session with 20 volunteers in south Florida. “We’re in management mode now.”

On Sunday the volunteers spent an hour in a classroom learning how to distinguish between invasive and native snakes and how to safely capture and contain them. Later, the group moved outside where coiled up pythons were released and volunteers used poles to pin their heads, sometimes with mouths agape, to the ground. They then grabbed the snake at the base of its head and carefully maneuvered it into a bag sealed with electrical tape.

“I’m not that worried about her,” said Mark McCarthy, 63, as his daughter, 29-year-old Keeley Philbrook, readied to grab hold of a five-footer (1-1/2 meter). She bagged it with some help from a fish and wildlife technician, and still shaking afterward said she would not try it alone.

Several classes are to be held monthly and officials say volunteers can hunt for snakes on some FWC-owned properties. Those who do so are encouraged to turn snakes over to wildlife officials to be euthanized or kept for research.

But officials are coming under fire from critics who say the public should stay away from the non-venomous pythons, which kill by constricting their prey. “This is ridiculous,” said Kenneth Krysko, a senior herpetologist at the University of Florida. “You can’t have Joe Schmo grabbing these snakes.”

Krysko said he thinks the civilian patrols will also be ineffective in reducing the python population.

Florida is a hub for the exotic pet trade and a hot bed of invasive species, and growing more than 18 feet (5-1/2 meters) long. Everglades, gobbling up whole alligators and other native species, and becoming top predators in the ecologically fragile Everglades, have become top predators in the state’s southern half, according to officials.